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- ART. III. — 1. *Letters from Florence on the Religious Reform Movements in Italy.* By WILLIAM TALMADGE. London. 1866. 12mo.
2. *L'Esaminatore. Foglio Periodico Settimanale.* Firenze. 1867, 1868.
3. *L'Emancipatore Cattolico. Giornale della Società Nazionale Emancipatrice e di Mutuo Soccorso del Sacerdozio Italiano.* Napoli. 1867, 1868.
4. *Programma e Statuto Fondamentale della Società Nazionale Emancipatrice del Sacerdozio Italiano.* Napoli. 1864.
5. *Il Matrimonio Civile e il Celibato del Clero Cattolico.* Pel P. LUIGI PROTA, con le Appendici Storiche del PROF. TOMMASO SEMMOLA. Napoli. 1864. 12mo.
6. *Pubblica Confessione di un Prigioniero dell' Inquisizione Romana ed Origine dei Mali della Chiesa Cattolica.* (Per PAOLO PANZINI, Capuccino.) Torino. 1865. 8vo.
7. *Recueil des Allocutions Consistoriales, Encycliques, et autres Lettres Apostoliques des Souverains Pontifes Clément XII., Benoit XIV., Pie VI., Pie VII., Léon XII., Grégoire XVI., et Pie IX., citées dans l'Encyclique et le Syllabus du 8 Décembre, 1864.* Deuxième Édition. Paris. 1865. 8vo.

WHEN M. Rouher pronounced in the *Corps Législatif* his emphatic “Jamais, jamais, jamais!” it is probable that he sealed the doom of that temporal power to which he was pledging the unqualified support of thirty-eight millions of Frenchmen. The promise which he then made, that under no circumstances would France permit the absorption of the Papal territory by United Italy, — a promise extorted from the Imperial cabinet by the sudden and unforeseen exigencies of debate, — shows how difficult it is for the coolest and shrewdest despot to control his own policy under even the forms of constitutional government, and how all the cunning experience of diplomacy may come to naught when subjected to the pressure of popular clamor or fanaticism. Nothing could have been much more unwise, whether as regards the future of the Second Empire or of the Papacy, than such a pledge given at such a time.

Italy can hardly as yet be considered a nation. The Tuscan and the Piedmontese, the Neapolitan and the Lombard, still look upon one another as strangers, and much is yet needed of common sufferings and dangers, of common humiliations and aspirations, to weld them into a compact and homogeneous nationality. The lines which have been drawn by segregation, under a thousand years of foreign domination, are too deep to be effaced in a single decade; nor is ruinous taxation, repaid only by the disasters of Custoza and Lissa, calculated to foster loyalty to the house of Savoy. Whatever, therefore, tends to excite community of feeling and to break down reverence for the past, whatever kindles the passions and hopes of the whole people, from Messina to Turin, making them throb in unison to hot desire or passionate revenge, is the surest means of destroying their separate provincialism, and of moulding them into a people one and indivisible. It would be difficult to say which has been the more successful in accomplishing this, Garibaldi at Mentana or Rouher in the Palais Bourbon.

In another aspect of the question, however, Rouher may be said to have been even more potential than Garibaldi. Difficult as it may be to fuse into one the dozen principalities into which Italy has been divided of old, impossible as may be the creation of an Italian nation so long as its natural capital is withheld from its grasp, yet the chief obstacle to success in the new order of things arises from the inevitable and implacable antagonism between Italian Catholicism and Italian nationality. Not that the pure dogmas of Latin Christianity have in them anything of itself incompatible with social or national development, but that the ecclesiastical structure reared upon them is necessarily involved in internecine strife with the Italy of the present and of the future, and one of the antagonists must inevitably succumb. Compromise is impossible, and it will eventually rest with the people to determine which shall be the victor, progress or reaction. The useless slaughter inflicted by the Chassepot rifle at Monte Rotondo was well fitted to lend strength to the party of progress, and their numbers must be swelled incalculably by the bitter humiliation felt at the insolent attitude now so gratuitously assumed by France.

The political future of Italy must be decided by its religion. If a majority of its people retain a blind and unreasoning reverence for the sacerdotalism under which they have been reared, all that has been accomplished will be undone. If, however, the shackles which they have been trained to wear can be thrown off, the rest will be comparatively easy, for the complications of European politics will sooner or later afford them the opportunity of occupying Rome. To attempt this before they are prepared for the inevitable changes which would alone render such occupation permanent and fruitful, would only be to risk what has already been gained. Any speculations, therefore, which omit the religious complications under which Italy is laboring leave out of the problem its controlling element.

To comprehend the religious reformatory movement now in progress throughout the peninsula, it is necessary first to understand the guiding principles of the hierarchy against which that movement is directed. To do this it is not requisite to enter upon questions of religious belief, for the reformers profess entire devotion in all points of faith inculcated by the Church. Schism they may perhaps not shrink from, but heresy forms, as yet, no part of their recognized programme, and they seem to have no intention of voluntarily withdrawing from communion with the visible head of the faith. It is the structure and policy of the Church which are the objects of their assaults, and while they reverence the Pope as the legitimate successor of St. Peter, they desire him to be venerable in apostolic simplicity and holiness, and not a sovereign whose indefinite powers and undefinable pretensions render impossible any progress, moral or political, to which he does not lend his assent.

In this country we see the Catholic clergy adapting themselves without complaint to republican institutions, subjected to the laws of the land, enjoying no special immunities or privileges, busily devoted to the duties of the pastorate, propagating their faith by persuasiveness, earnestly engaged in the religious instruction and moral training of their flocks, and active in the charitable work of feeding the hungry and curing the sick. More than any other denomination through-

out the populous North, their labors lie among the poor and humble, and their ceaseless ministrations accomplish results which could be reached by no other instrumentality. It is difficult to imagine these ardent and self-denying men as members of the same brotherhood, believers in the same faith, part of the same organization, as that which from the Vatican has armed the Antibes legion, and which proclaims eternal war against equality, freedom of conscience, liberal education, self-government, and, in short, all the forces which constitute progress and modern civilization.

While the ministers of the Church, under the pressure of circumstances, can adapt themselves to the necessities of their position in a free community like ours, it is the misfortune of the Papacy that it is the exponent of an infallible church, and that, acting under the immediate inspiration of St. Peter, the Popes have always been and must always be infallible.* Infallibility is a heavy burden for poor humanity. It can confess no errors, it can rectify no blunders, it can offer no expiation for wrongs. To be consistent with itself, it must remain in one age what it was in another, under totally different conditions. The world moves on, while it is forced to lag behind, and it thus becomes an anachronism which has lost its usefulness, and can only exert its powers for evil rather than for good. Thus Mastai Ferretti, kind and benevolent as a man, finds himself as Pius IX. charged with the tremendous task of perpetuating in the nineteenth century the theocratic autocracy which Hildebrand aimed to establish, and which Innocent III. wielded with awful effect.

Pius has not left us to gather this from his actions alone. In December, 1864, he issued to all the prelates of the Church his famous Encyclical epistle, accompanied by a Syllabus of prevalent errors for condemnation by the faithful; and in this formal proclamation he condensed an emphatic declaration of the pretensions, the designs, and the policy of the Church. No claim of supremacy over princes and peoples, which made the mediæval Church the unquestioned master of Europe, is abandoned; and power unjustly withheld alone is wanting to restore the halcyon times when the successor of St. Peter regulated the conscience

* Pii PP. IX. *Encyc. Qui pluribus*, 9 Novemb. 1864.

of Christendom, dethroned kings, commanded war and peace, and insured the purity of faith by an occasional *auto-da-fé*.

On one point, indeed, Pius advances a step beyond his predecessors. While the Church has always assumed infallibility in matters of faith, it has hitherto been held that on points of discipline she may err; but Pius, in the Encyclical, claims that Papal decrees, whether they affect dogma or discipline, are equally binding on the consciences of the faithful, and that no dissidence in either case is admissible on the part of any one pretending to belong to the communion of Rome.

Thus all the old extensions of ecclesiastical despotism, founded on the False Decretals and enforced throughout the darkness of the Middle Ages, are to be found condensed in the Encyclical and Syllabus, with a cynical contempt for modern intelligence. In claiming peremptorily that the Church should have unrestricted liberty to enforce her laws without limitation or hindrance,* it is not the free exercise of her religion that is demanded, but the power of persecution. That every man should be allowed to choose his religion according to the dictates of his own conscience is repeatedly denounced as a fatal error, a madness, and a liberty only of damnation.† Catholicism is declared to be the only religion which should be suffered to exist by the state,‡ and those nations which tolerate, even in strangers, the exercise of other forms of worship are specially condemned.§ It is declared to be the duty of the state to punish all who wander from the true faith, and the Church itself is asserted to have the power of enforcing its decrees by temporal as well as by spiritual punishments.|| That Protestantism should be considered as a form of Christianity is declared to be a pernicious error,¶ and the efforts of Bible societies to diffuse among the people a knowledge of the Scriptures are condemned as tending to lead the flock astray.**

* Syllab. Prop. 19. Alloc. *Multis gravibusque*, 17 Decemb. 1860. Alloc. *Maxima quidem*, 9 Junii, 1862.

† Encyc. Decemb. 1864. Gregor. XVI. Encyc. *Mirari*, 1832. Syllab. Prop. 15, 16.

‡ Gregor. XVI. Encyc. *Mirari*, 1832. Syllab. Prop. 77.

§ Syllab. Prop. 78.

|| Syllab. Prop. 24.

¶ Syllab. Prop. 18.

** Syllab. § IV. Encyc. *Qui pluribus*, 9 Novemb. 1846.

What is especially shocking in all this is not merely its bigotry and intolerance, which are shared, unfortunately, by too many of the followers of Christ. When these are passive, they injure only the individual who indulges in them; but Pius proclaims the principles of active persecution for conscience' sake, which have repeatedly desolated Europe from end to end, and have done more to retard human progress than the wildest ambition of kings. How sedulously the people are trained to this unchristian duty is visible in the Roman breviary, which, in the office of May 5th, is careful to recite that Pius V. was enrolled among the saints of Heaven to reward the inflexibility with which, as Inquisitor, he had pursued the enemies of the Church; and the lesson was emphatically repeated when, in June, 1867, at the celebration of the centenary of St. Peter, Pedro Arbues, one of the bloodiest of the Inquisitors of Spain, was solemnly canonized. It is easy thus to understand why the Inquisition has been maintained in Rome after its expulsion from every other land, and how culpable are the Catholic sovereigns in not reinstating it with full power to repeat the exploits of Torquemada.

If freedom of conscience is thus to be sternly repressed, it is not surprising that freedom of education is also to be destroyed as a dangerous error of modern times. That the state should provide schools for its youth, independently of the Church, is denounced as an evil to be suppressed. It is formally declared that all public schools should be under the supervision and control of the ecclesiastical authorities; and as it is a mistake, according to the Syllabus, to consider the methods of the mediæval theologians as unsuited to modern progress in knowledge, we can readily fancy the application of these principles restoring to us the ages of faith, when the populations were steeped in ignorance dense enough for unquestioning credulity, and when subtle schoolmen ranged themselves under the banners of Duns Scotus and Thomas Aquinas.* We are not, indeed, left entirely to conjecture as to the effect of thus placing the control of education in the hands of men trained in the principles of the Roman curia. This was done by the Concordat with Austria, the re-

* Syllab. Prop. 13, 45, 47.

sult of which is described with homely vigor in the petition for its abolition lately presented by the Transylvanians to the Reichsrath: "At the annual examinations, the best children are able to give an account of how things look in heaven; they know the names of the principal angels, the number of the saints, and they know something about hell and purgatory. But how things look in their own land, what it produces, what might be produced better and cheaper, what is exported and imported, &c., of all this they know nothing. If the children are able to repeat, like parrots, their catechism and Bible history, they get presents, the ceremony is over, and the old story is repeated in the old way. The municipality has nothing to do with the school beyond furnishing the building, fuel, and all other necessary or unnecessary expenses. It is no wonder that the greater part of the inhabitants of the Austrian monarchy believe that religion, faith, and Concordat form one indivisible trinity."*

In the Middle Ages, one of the most fruitful sources of oppression to the people, and of demoralization to the clergy, was the immunity enjoyed by every ecclesiastic from subjection to the law. The jurisdiction of the spiritual courts was not confined to spiritual cases, but extended its shield over all members of the Church, and the practical immunity thence afforded to clerical offences is evidenced by the "benefit of clergy" in the common law of England, which was virtually a free pardon for crime. The common sense of modern times has put an end to this absurdity, and the law, even in Catholic

* To this plain-speaking the Austrian bishops, in their address to the Kaiser, retort that "it is not better instruction that is wanted. What is desired is to attack religion and morality. It is wished to make the school serve to propagate unbelief; that is the chief thing." It would be difficult to estimate how much religion has suffered in all ages from the arrogant defenders who identify their own interests with those of Christ. The zealous churchman on the battle-field of Mentana could see the smile of Heaven on the placid features of the Papal Zouave who had fallen in defence of St. Peter, while those of the Garibaldino near him were distorted with the scowl of hell; and the same spirit leads the *Unità Cattolica*, the organ of the Papal court, to declare that God, foreseeing the weakness of Francis Joseph, would not permit the beneficent Concordat to render him fortunate, and that the disasters of Solferino and Sadowa were the punishments in advance (for to God the future is as the past) of his letter of October 15, 1867, to the Cardinal Archbishop of Vienna.

countries, recognizes in the ecclesiastic no superiority elevating him beyond its reach. But the Church has once claimed and enjoyed this privilege for its members, and its infallibility requires that the claim should not be abandoned. Accordingly, Pius demands that the cases of the clergy should not be tried by the secular tribunals, and for this claim he asserts a Divine sanction.* The value of such a privilege, where religion and politics are so inextricably intermingled, can be estimated from the fact that, in 1862, the government of Italy was obliged to prosecute the bishops of Bologna and Fano for issuing circulars to their priests, instructing them to make use of the confessional for the purpose of stimulating desertion in the Italian army. The bishops assembled in Rome in June, 1862, for the canonization of the Japanese martyrs, denounced this act of self-preservation as a violation of the imprescriptible rights of the Church, and bemoaned the hard fate of these worthy prelates thus persecuted for the discharge of their duty. †

With regard to the relations between the Papacy and temporal sovereigns, the Encyclical and Syllabus are similarly indisposed to abandon one jot of the old assumptions of supremacy. When we see it formally asserted that the popes have never transcended the limits of their just authority, ‡ we are driven to conclude that the opportunity, and not the will, is wanting for Pius to repeat the exhibitions of papal autocracy which in the Middle Ages rendered the successors of the humble fisherman of Galilee the arbiters of the destinies of Christendom. Indeed, the Roman breviary teaches us the same lesson in still reciting, on the festival of Gregory VII., May 27th, that he was canonized for his courageous resistance to the Emperor Henry IV., in depriving him of his crown, and releasing his subjects from their allegiance. As the old traditions of ecclesiastical supremacy are thus carefully treasured, it need not surprise us to see that kings and princes are positively asserted to be subject to the jurisdiction of the

* Syllab. Prop. 30, 31.

† "Venerabiles Antistites ac Dei Sacerdotes exauctorantur, exulare coguntur, aut in carceres detruduntur; quinimo ante tribunalia civilia, pro constantia in sacro ministerio obeundo, contumeliose pertrahuntur." — Declarat. Episc. 8 Junii, 1862.

‡ Syllab. Prop. 23.

Church, and that even the internal municipal laws of states are declared to be involved in the same subjection.* Separation between Church and State is denounced as a dangerous error, but this union is not to be a partnership, for, as the civil power is asserted not to be competent to define the limits of its own authority, the privileges claimed for the Church must necessarily render it paramount.†

Thus we find in this authoritative exposition of the Papal pretensions and policy every principle requisite to the restoration of the Middle Ages in all their glory of credulous faith and spiritual despotism. Indeed, we are not left merely to guess at the aspirations of the Roman curia; for the Syllabus ends by boldly declaring the incompatibility of its system with the present order of things. Its 80th Proposition positively condemns as a pernicious error the idea that the supreme head of the Church either can or ought to reconcile himself with progress and modern civilization, — that “*Romanus Pontifex potest ac debet cum progressu, cum liberalismo, et cum recenti civilitate sese reconciliare et componere.*”

It is melancholy to see an organization so powerful for good as the Catholic Church thus deliberately nullify its usefulness, and array itself against human liberty and intelligence. Yet at the same time we cannot but admire so striking an exhibition of moral intrepidity on the part of an old man on the verge of the grave, already shorn of half his domains, and indebted solely to foreign bayonets for the support of his tottering throne and the unwilling submission of his few remaining subjects, while boldly proclaiming war upon all the principles of progress and of modern ideas, asserting all the prerogatives which enabled his predecessors to tread upon the necks of kings, and desperately but resolutely battling to hand down to his successors unimpaired the heritage which he has received; his sturdy faith never questioning whether that heritage was honestly acquired and worthily used, nor whether the good of mankind may not demand that he and all his machinery of obstruction and wrong should be incontinently hurried out of sight and buried forever beyond the possibility of resurrection.

* Syllab. Prop. 54, 57.

† Syllab. Prop. 55, 19.

The Italian reformers, however, to whom these claims are not mere theoretical opinions, but solid and most uncomfortable facts, have no admiration to waste on a fortitude which persists in endeavoring to treat them as Arnold of Brescia was treated by Adrian IV. or Savonarola by Alexander VI. The Papal supremacy and policy are to them the source of daily tribulation, and consequently have become the object of their strenuous and unremitting assaults. Beginning with a keen sense of the injuries inflicted on Church and people by the abuses of overpowering sacerdotalism, they have been gradually led to examine the foundation on which rests the structure that so long overshadowed Christendom; and as their minds have become freed from the incubus of established authority, they have seen that tradition and custom had no weight when opposed to Scripture and the authentic records of the primitive Church. Their object, therefore, has become the restoration of the Church to its condition in the earlier days, before wealth and power had subordinated its spiritual to its temporal interests. Devoutly believing all the points of faith inculcated by the Council of Trent, and willing to accord to the Bishop of Rome a primacy of honor, they strive to dissociate spiritual from temporal affairs, to throw off the autocratic and all-pervading authority which renders every man's conscience and actions subject to the supervision and direction of the Roman curia, to restore to the local churches the independence which they originally enjoyed, to relax various points of discipline which separate the priesthood into a class distinct from the laity, and generally so to liberalize the Church as to bring it within the influence of modern ideas, and to place it in accord with the progress of modern civilization.

As the active movers in this effort at reform are ecclesiastics, and as its success is to be assured by influencing the ecclesiastical body, the boldness of the task can be appreciated only by understanding how completely all members of the Church in Italy are at the mercy of the hierarchy, and how utterly the hierarchy are dependent upon the Pope and the curia. In Italy the priesthood are drawn almost exclusively from the humbler classes. Educated in seminaries where seclusion from the world is rigidly enforced and passive obe-

dience is taught as one of the first of duties, any native spirit of independence which may perchance exist is thoroughly eradicated. When admitted to holy orders, as their daily bread is dependent upon their daily ministrations, and as these may at any moment be suspended by their superiors, nature, training, and necessity conspire to hold the clergy in the most abject subordination. Their personal importance, moreover, is derived from the superstitious veneration of the people, who regard them as part of a splendid establishment, endowed with mysterious and undefinable power, so that every motive is brought to bear to render them the zealous champions of a system which holds them in perpetual slavery.

If the plebeian clergy are thus the passive instruments of their superiors, those superiors are equally held in subjection by the Pope. The appointment to the episcopate is virtually in the hands of the Roman court, and zeal in its service is the surest avenue to promotion. The episcopal oath, which beyond the Alps has been modified to suit the exigencies of jealous monarchs, in Italy still binds the prelate as a vassal to the Pope, without even an exception of the allegiance due to his sovereign, and forces him to oppose and persecute all heretics and rebels against the Papal power.

The Church militant being thus composed of such materials, and thus organized like an army on a war footing, the position of mutineers who seek to throw off the bonds of discipline can readily be imagined. The troubles of such men as Scipione dei Ricci, Rosmini, and Gioberti are well known, and with the increasing troubles of the Church its ruling spirits grow more vindictive. For urging some moderate reforms, Father Gioacchino Ventura was forced to fly from Italy. When Father Passaglia, in 1862, endeavored to array the priesthood against that temporal power which compromises all the higher interests of religion, adhesion to even the very temperate protest to which he procured thousands of priestly signatures was visited with exemplary chastisement. The signatories were promptly suspended from their functions, and deprived of subsistence until they humbly signed a recantation; and Passaglia, notwithstanding his eminent reputation, was excommunicated, and is still under deprivation. Cardinal D'Andrea, a prelate justly

revered for his distinguished virtues, was suspended from all his functions, his offence being his known liberality of sentiment and his resignation of his office of Prefect of the Congregation of the Index, to avoid being made the instrument of oppression. Submitting without a murmur, he left Rome for his health, and resided privately at Naples, but the jealous fears of his colleagues were still unsatisfied. In December, 1867, after the reactionists had been strengthened by the victory of Monte Rotondo, he was ordered back to Rome, where he has been forced, by means which can only be guessed at, to sign a most humiliating retraction, and to withdraw the countenance which he had extended to the *Esaminatore*, the organ of the reforming Catholics at Florence. In 1854, Panzini, a learned Capuchin friar, conceived the idea that the evils under which the Church was laboring were principally the result of the enforced celibacy of its members. He privately addressed an anonymous memorial to Pius, praying for an investigation of the subject, and its submission to the prelates then assembled in Rome. This and several similar applications being disregarded, he finally, in 1859, prepared a voluminous essay on the subject, addressed to the Catholic bishops at large, and committed it to the press. The printer made haste to submit the manuscript to the ecclesiastical authorities; Panzini was at once imprisoned and handed over to the Inquisition, which, after six months spent in investigation, condemned him to twelve years' incarceration and perpetual degradation, notwithstanding his earnest protestations of belief in all the points of faith inculcated by the Church, and of his readiness to be convinced of any error into which he might have fallen as to the expediency of the rule in question. At the instance of the Italian ambassador, however, in 1862, he was released from prison, but not restored to his priestly functions, and in 1865, in the safe refuge of Turin, he published the essay, rewritten from memory, under the title of *Pubblica Confessione di un Prigioniero dell' Inquisizione Romana*. The work is well worthy the attention of the student of contemporary history and of human nature. The thesis is argued exclusively from a Catholic stand-point; the profoundest veneration is manifested for all the dogmas of the Church, outside of whose pale salvation is

impossible ; while the bitterest spirit of revolt is displayed against the grinding tyranny of the hierarchy, and the condition of ecclesiastical morality throughout Italy is described as terrible. We have it on good authority that a distinguished prelate exclaimed, on reading the volume, that, if it had been cast in a more popular form, it alone would have been sufficient to provoke a revolution in the bosom of the Church.

Of late the trials of the reformers have been sharpened. The Italian government at first protected them ; but, under the reactionary tendency of the recent cabinets of Florence, they have had much to suffer. Still clinging to the Church, and claiming a place among its ministers, they are exposed to many evils which they might escape if their consciences would allow them to renounce all allegiance to the power against whose abuses they gallantly struggle. In a letter now before us from the Rev. Dr. Protà, the energetic leader of the movement in Naples, he touchingly alludes to the trials endured by him and his brethren for the cause which they have espoused : “ Up to the present time we have suffered everything, — the desertion of friends, the calumny of enemies, the curses of our brethren of the priesthood, the enmity of the prejudiced and fanatical masses, and even the want of the necessities of life. Yet have we borne all with resignation, and the mercy of our Lord and Saviour has never failed to comfort us in our trials, and to raise in the hearts of strangers sentiments of kindness and charity towards us.”

The position of the Neapolitan reformers, in fact, has been of late one of peculiar hardship. The reactionary archbishop, Cardinal Riario Sporza, was one of the prelates exiled for his opposition to the new *régime*. In his absence much was accomplished. Dr. Protà founded the “ Società Emancipatrice e di mutuo Soccorso del Sacerdozio Italiano,” which soon enrolled in its membership three hundred priests. The royal chapels were placed in their charge, and money was appropriated by the government for their support. A year ago, however, the policy of Baron Ricasoli underwent a mysterious change. With the other reactionary bishops, Sporza was reinstated, and lost no time in visiting the reformers with his vengeance. They were forthwith suspended from their func-

tions, and as at the same time the public subvention was withdrawn, all sources of support were cut off. Under this pressure the major part "reconciled" themselves to the Church by taking an oath dictated by Sporza, "which amounted not merely to a renunciation of the society and a recantation of every reforming principle, but even to an abjuration of their civil allegiance as Italian citizens."* A remnant of the band, however, stood firm, and have continued to maintain a gallant though unequal contest. One of their efforts has been the founding of an "Asilo di lavoro," under the guidance of Padre Raggianti Salvatore, where a certain number of these persecuted ones unite their slender efforts at self-support by teaching and ministering the Gospel to the scanty flock which they have succeeded in collecting around them. Every Sunday they address a congregation of eighty or one hundred of the faithful, and through the week they hold day-schools for children and night-schools for adults, in each of which they number about thirty scholars.

The isolation of these men is indeed well fitted to test their thorough conscientiousness in the task which they have undertaken. Still Catholics in faith, they can neither ask nor expect active aid from the flourishing Protestantism of other countries. The laity which surrounds them is either superstitiously subjected to the Church, or else, with rare exceptions, perfectly indifferent to religion and impervious to religious influences. Their fellow-churchmen naturally regard them with horror as heretics in all but name, and as traitors and rebels of the worst sort. The prelates in general lose no opportunity of persecuting them with all the ingenuity of enemies armed with irresponsible powers of oppression. The very numbers of the ecclesiastical army,—in the Pontifical States, before the an-

* Report of Rev. W. C. Langdon, Secretary of Italian Committee, Am. Episcopal Church. In an address to his brethren, under date of January 2, 1868, Dr. Prota bitterly alludes to these cruel trials, brought upon them by the short-sighted weakness of the government: "Nè valsero a scuotere la nostra fede politica le crudeli ed efferate persecuzione di certi uomini, che assunti al potere adoperarono ogni mezzo per aggiogare al carro della prepotenza straniera la patria loro. . . . E quanto più vile ed abietta fu la loro vendetta contro di noi sino a privarci di quei pochi mezzi di sussistenza che lo stesso governo nazionale a noi avea concesso in omaggio ai principî che abbiâm propugnati."

nexations of 1862, there was one churchman to every fifty-five inhabitants, and in Northern Italy the proportion is as one to one hundred and forty,—by subdividing the sources of revenue into the minutest portions, render them all dependent for their daily bread upon the daily stipend derived from their ministry, which is at the mercy of the irresponsible caprice of their superiors.

The training of the seminary not only carefully unfits the priest for the active duties of life, thus rendering him wholly dependent upon his profession, but it further makes him incapable of forming a correct estimate of the movements taking place around him, and precludes all sympathy between him and the people whose religious guidance is committed to his hands. With some, perhaps, a sense of patriotism may neutralize this to a certain extent; but, with the majority, class influences and early education destroy the sentiment of nationality, by rendering the Church the sole object of aspirations, and by making obedience to its behests paramount to all other duties. The priesthood is thus a nation within a nation, and the antagonism which is daily growing between the clergy and the people threatens results more disastrous to the pretensions of the Church, and perhaps in the end to religion itself, than all other causes combined. Under the Austrian rule in Lombardy, for instance, the Church establishment was moulded and controlled in the interest of the secular tyranny; the priesthood came to be regarded as an efficient branch of the police system, and its spiritual influence over the laity was reduced almost to a nullity. Since then the conflict between the Papacy and the new *régime* has not tended to harmonize matters, and the breach grows daily wider. What sympathy, indeed, can exist between a people eager to deprive the Pope-king of his sovereignty, and a clergy which can exhibit, as was lately done in a Venetian sacristy, a picture representing on one side the symbolic triangle of the Father, the rays of which surrounded the legend *Ineffabilis Deus*, while on the other side, to balance this, was the holy Dove with rays embracing the word *Syllabus*? When that essence of spiritual and temporal tyranny can thus be deified by the priesthood, it is no wonder that Garibaldi, in a letter written on the last day of 1867 in

answer to a friend pleading for the toleration of intolerance, is led to exclaim: "I know you say, 'Liberty of worship, liberty of conscience, liberty for all opinion,' and I repeat the cry; only it must be in the mouths of honest men. Does anybody believe in liberty for vipers, for crocodiles, for thieves and assassins? And what is the priest but the assassin of the free soul,—far more mischievous than the assassin of the body?" The result of this antagonism, as stated by an ecclesiastic in the *Esaminatore* of Florence, August, 1867, is that the laity and clergy are separated into two camps, *umanamente irreconciliabili*; and by another, in the same journal of December 1st, that a priest cannot appear in public in his sacerdotal habit without being exposed to insult,—that the name of priest has become to the popular ear the synonym of rogue and impostor, and that the virtuous are enveloped indistinguishably in the evil reputation of the bad, to the destruction of the highest interests of religion, and to the neutralizing of all the good influences of the ecclesiastical body at large.

Unfortunately, the character and morals of the clergy in general are not such as to redeem them from odium, or to preserve for them the influence which they risk by their reactionary tendencies. The reformers unanimously attribute the notorious clerical licentiousness to the operation of the rule of compulsory celibacy, and look to its abrogation as the only efficient remedial measure; while the position occupied by the priesthood in public estimation is confessed by a writer who, in defending them from the assaults of the liberal press (*Esaminatore*, 15th November, 1867), is reduced to the argument that they are not in reality worse than the laity, but that, owing to their position, their evil courses are more scandalous and attract more attention.

Such being the condition and relations of the Italian Church, it is evident that the attempt now making by the ecclesiastics who are endeavoring to rescue it from the demoralizing preponderance of its hierarchy, and also to defend it from the assaults of free-thinking liberalism, may have results of the gravest importance. At the same time the position of the leaders is by no means a bed of roses. For the last five years

they have fought their desperate battle with a gallantry which does them the highest honor. Adopting as their motto Cavour's celebrated aphorism, "*Libera chiesa in libero stato*," they have on the one side to ward off the attacks of their infuriated brethren, and on the other to stay the sacrilegious hands which their only allies seek to lay on the holy of holies.

For a long while they flattered themselves that the panacea for all ecclesiastical woes was to be found in a General Council, and for this they lustily called. At length Pius IX. listened to their cry, and, with the bishops of Christendom assembled around him on the centenary of St. Peter, he had the opportunity of ascertaining whether such a dangerous expedient could be safely dared. Constance and Bâle were full of significant warning of the antagonisms which might arise between the Church universal and its visible head, when the one, acting under the direct inspiration of the Holy Ghost, might seek to exert its supremacy at the expense of the other. If the Council of Trent — where the Holy Ghost was profanely said to be carried backwards and forwards in a despatch-box between the council-room and the Vatican — was more reassuring, yet on the other hand there was the example of the Assembly of Notables and the Three Estates, whose convocation ushered in the revolution of '89. Apparently, however, the temper manifested by the episcopal pilgrims, who laid their tribute reverently at the foot of the papal throne, was satisfactory, and the great council, the first which the Church has held for three centuries, is appointed for November of the present year.

The reformers had so often demanded such an ecclesiastical parliament as the cure for the evils of which they complained, that at first they could only express their satisfaction at the prospect of its assembling. Reflection, however, speedily caused a change of tone. It was in the highest degree improbable that a court so entirely reactionary as that of Rome would voluntarily call together in deliberation the representatives of the whole Church, if thereby there should be any chance of imperilling either its privileges or its policy; and the rumor soon spread that the real object of the projected council was to render, by an organic law, the autocracy of the Holy See as

perfect in theory as it already is in fact, — to sanctify, by an article of faith, the supreme infallibility of the Pope, which is as yet only a matter of assumption. That the reformers should forthwith direct their bitterest attacks against the council is therefore scarcely a matter of surprise.

It would be difficult, indeed, to see what hopes they could reasonably entertain from the deliberations of such a body. In earlier times, when bishops were freely elected by their flocks and enjoyed local autonomy, their assembling to counsel together on the spiritual and temporal interests of the Church was not a mere form, and the result of their deliberations might well be looked for with hopeful solicitude by Christendom. The bishop of to-day is, however, a very different personage. Selected with a view to his probable usefulness to his superiors, at his consecration he takes an oath of feudal allegiance to the Pope, which, with careful superfluity of verbiage, binds him to regard the temporal interests, privileges, and power of the Papacy as superior to all other worldly considerations; to defend and advance those interests with all his power; to hold as rebels and enemies all who oppose them, and specially to take part in no councils where any attempt is made to diminish them; and, moreover, to use every effort to enforce the decrees and statutes of the Church.* Thus bound to absolute vassalage by the terms on which he has accepted his office, and subjected to the absolute and irre-

* “Ego N. electus ecclesiæ N. ab hac hora in antea fidelis et obediens ero beato Petro Apostolo sanctæque Romanæ Ecclesiæ et Domino N. Papa N. suisque successoribus canonicis intrantibus. . . . Papatum Romanum et regalia sancti Petri adjutor eis ero ad retinendum et defendendum, salvo meo ordine, contra omnem hominem. . . . Jura, honores, privilegia et auctoritatem sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ, Domini nostri Papæ, et successorum prædictorum conservare, defendere, augere, promovere curabo. Neque ero in consilio, vel facto, seu tractatu, in quibus contra ipsum Dominum nostrum, vel eandem Romanam Ecclesiam aliqua sinistra vel præjudicialia personarum, juris, honoris, status et potestatis eorum machinentur. Et si talia a quibuscunque tractari vel procurari novero, impediam hoc pro posse; et quanto citius potero, significabo eidem Domino nostro. . . . Rebelles eidem Domino nostro . . . pro posse persequar et impugnabo.” As stated above, beyond the Alps Catholic sovereigns no longer allow their subjects to renounce their allegiance by this form of oath, and it has been modified accordingly. The Italian government has taken the same stand, but Rome has refused to yield, and some fifteen of the Italian sees are consequently vacant; as incumbents have died, no successors could be consecrated. In America the most obnoxious portions of the oath have likewise been omitted.

sponsible authority of the curia, there is little danger of uncourtly opposition to the wishes of the Supreme Pontiff. To what depths of degradation and self-abasement, indeed, the assiduous enforcement of the teachings of the Council of Trent have reduced the once independent representatives of the apostles, may be gathered from the man-worship offered to Pius IX. by the two hundred and seventy-five bishops assembled in June, 1862, for the canonization of the Japanese martyrs. Not one of them refused his signature to the Declaration in which the Pope is addressed: "Thou art for us the master of sound doctrine, the centre of unity, the unfailing light prepared for the people by the wisdom of God. Thou art the stone and the foundation of the Church, and against Thee the gates of hell shall not prevail. When Thou speakest, we hear Peter; when Thou commandest, we obey Christ." When men who proclaim such sentiments are called together by the object of their adoration, it can only be for the purpose of registering decrees drawn up in advance.

It is true that all these reverend prelates may not be personally in favor of arbitrary centralization. The Gallican Church has its traditions of self-government, and the free atmosphere of Great Britain and America cannot but have its effect on those who are trained under its bracing influence. Yet there is little to be dreaded from such possibilities. The Archbishop of Cincinnati, who is regarded as one of the most enlightened and liberal prelates in America, when he received the Encyclical of December, 1864, with its accompanying Syllabus, published a pastoral to his flock, in which he declared: "We receive it implicitly, we bow to it reverently, we embrace it cordially, we hail it gratefully. To us it is as the voice of God on Sinai, on the Jordan, on Thebor." Of the Gallican Church, which still affects to reverence the memory of Bossuet, there were fifty-four prelates present at the assembly of June, 1862, who abjured all independence in signing the Declaration just alluded to, and every bishop in France subsequently followed their example. Even if these men who thus proclaimed their helpless and hopeless degradation could be aroused to assert their manhood, yet a glance at the statistics of the Church will show how little they could effect by such an effort.

There are in all about six hundred and seventy-five Catholic sees, of which, including one in Algeria, nearly five hundred and seventy are European, and a little more than one hundred are American, from Quebec to Valparaiso. Now, of the European sees, three hundred, or more than half, are Italian; and though some of these, in consequence of the rupture between the courts of Florence and Rome, are vacant, still the latter can count upon no less than two hundred and eighty Italian prelates bound to implicit obedience by the oath of vassalage and by every motive of self-interest. Even if this were not sufficient, there are moreover to be summed up the bishops *in partibus infidelium*, — men who are consecrated to ancient sees, now in possession of the infidel. Nearly all of these are hangers on or *attachés* of the Roman Court, and, having no individual or conflicting interests, they are to be relied on as a corps devoted at all hazards to its master. Their number is not readily to be ascertained, but we have met with a partial list amounting to one hundred and forty-six. Adding these to the existing prelates of Italy, and we have four hundred and twenty-six within the Alps, or more than half of all the Catholic hierarchy. Holding thus an overwhelming majority close at hand and easily controlled, there would seem to be little risk incurred from any possibly independent spirits who may wearily journey to Rome from distant regions.

If the material to be collected together is thus plastic, the arrangements for moulding it are none the less carefully contrived. Every precaution has been taken to prevent any voice from being raised in opposition to the preconceived designs of the curia. The Pope has nominated a *Congregazione Centrale*, which is to decide without appeal as to the matters to be submitted for discussion; and this body is exclusively composed of cardinals who hold positions in the Inquisition. Under it are five sub-committees, termed *consulte*, to regulate the details of their respective departments, and each of these is presided over by one of the cardinals of the Central Congregation. The results which are to be expected from their labors may be anticipated from the character of the men selected to manage them. The less important ones are committed to prelates comparatively unknown: that on Oriental

affairs is given in charge to Cardinal Barnabo, that on ecclesiastical diplomacy to Reisach, and that on the religious orders to Bozzari ; while everything relating to dogma is directed by Cardinal Bilio, who is notorious as the compiler of the Syllabus ; and the momentous questions involved in the canons and discipline are under the guiding hand of Caterini, whose whole career has been passed in the Inquisition, and who has already distinguished his new office by issuing to all the bishops of the Church a circular propounding seventeen questions for discussion. These questions carefully avoid all the subjects on which reform is vital, and confine themselves either to points of minor importance or to the endeavor to give practical effect to the principles of the Syllabus. As the reformers indignantly declare, Rome is busy in tithing the mint and cumin and anise, while the law and the faith are left to shift for themselves, and the laity is every day cherishing a sentiment of deeper contempt and hostility for the Church.

It is no wonder, then, that protests are being issued in advance. Instead of being a general assembly of the Church to devise remedies for the evils which pervade the whole body, it is declared to be an ingenious device to consolidate the power which is crushing out all self-sustaining vitality in the establishment, and the reformers naturally see their condemnation already drawn up and only awaiting a formal indorsement. They therefore declare that they recognize in no body of men convened under such conditions the authority to speak in the name of the Church at large ; and the bolder spirits are already demanding that all sects of Christians shall be received as belonging to the same brotherhood in Christ ; and that only by assembling delegates from all communions can a truly œcumenic council be held, whose decrees shall be binding as the emanation of the Holy Ghost.

In the existing condition of humanity, such a convocation is of course impracticable, and the call for it is interesting only as showing how rapidly Rome, as is her wont, is driving her disaffected children into open revolt. They are still struggling hard to persuade themselves that this is not inevitable, and that in a church which claims implicit obedience in everything, they can still retain their place while striving to alter its

whole internal structure. Thus Dr. Prota, in his address of January 2, 1868, declares that he and his associates have not failed to advocate the ancient and wise institution of the Papacy, and he repudiates with indignation the assertion that their opposition to the temporal power and to the usurped authority over the hierarchy is drawn from heterodox and Protestant sources. So Panzini, while attacking with ferocious energy the whole system of arbitrary regulations which render the ecclesiastical body the slaves of its visible head, is careful to declare in advance his belief that the Church is infallible and without taint in its faith and morals; and one of his strongest arguments for reform is, that the abuses which he condemns have insured the perdition of so many million souls by driving them into heresy.

Illogical as this may seem to us, it is the necessary pathway to freedom of conscience. Savonarola was a good Catholic, and his works have always been pronounced strictly orthodox, yet his hopeless contest with the Papacy was rapidly ripening him into a heretic, when his career was cut short by the stake. Luther held to the faith for fully three years after he had committed himself to exposing the evils of the ecclesiastical system, and it was only his excommunication by Leo X. that forced him to the conviction that disobedience was possible to him.

Yet the end is plain. An infallible church is of necessity immovable. *Nulla vestigia retrorsum*, — the way once entered must be pursued, and to all demands for the abolition of evil the only answer is *non possumus*. Men bred in the atmosphere of the Roman curia cannot but regard their privileges and authority as of Divine origin and as part and parcel of religion itself. The dividing line between faith and discipline — between that which is immutable by its essence and that which, being the work of man, can be changed by man — is difficult to draw, when infallibility has prescribed and still enforces the rules of discipline. All which those in power desire to retain can thus be so inextricably entangled with points of faith, that no very ingenious casuistry is required to prove all efforts at reform heretical. Thus fortified, it is vain to expect that the Roman Court will listen to demands for re-

construction. Its only answer must be a command of silent obedience, and, if this is refused, it can only respond by excommunication.

The reformers seek to reduce the Papacy to a simple primacy of honor ; to restore to the episcopate the independence which it enjoyed in the primitive Church, to the priesthood its due protection from arbitrary authority, and to the laity its proper share in the selection of its pastors and in the affairs of the Church. They ask that the Scriptures be no longer sealed in an unknown tongue, and that the ritual be translated into the vernacular ; that compulsory celibacy and irrevocable vows be abolished ; and that the long canonical hours of fasting and prayer be no longer obligatory, but be left to the conscience of the individual, as a voluntary oblation and sacrifice. Auricular confession—the most powerful source of priestly influence—is no longer to be imposed as a duty, but only to be encouraged as an incentive to virtue. Some of the reformers, indeed, have refused to adopt the new dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and have been duly excommunicated in consequence ; but thus far they have all held fast to the ancient faith, and their efforts at reform have been directed to simple points of discipline ; yet the programme is wide enough to afford them ample work, as it is nothing less than the remodelling of the whole ecclesiastical structure. That structure has thus far resisted the shocks of centuries. Every breach that has been made in it has been carefully repaired and strengthened by new lines of circumvallation ; and, however we may admire the gallantry of the forlorn hope now advancing to the assault, we can scarcely reckon upon their success. If the General Council be held as promised, their condemnation would seem to be inevitable, when some will probably retract and submit. The bolder spirits, however, will carry on the contest, no longer as schismatics engaged in a revolt, but as heretics in open war. Thus released, in spite of themselves, from the remaining links of the chain which fetters their conscience, the critical spirit which they have carried into the examination of the external history of Latin Christianity will be extended to its spiritual record, and a new reformed church will arise, to take its place among the countless denominations of those who reject Catholic unity.

Indications of this tendency, indeed, are already beginning to manifest themselves, under the pressure of recent events. In the same number of the *Emancipatore Cattolico*, in which Dr. Protà publishes his address recognizing the Papacy as the centre of Catholic unity, he admits two articles denouncing it for more than mere abuses of discipline. ' Thus Luigi Settembrini writes: " The Catholic faith must render itself more spiritual, must divest itself of the gross superstitions which are opposed to the Gospel, which ruin the faith, and which lead men, by confounding the true and the false, to reject all " ; and the Padre Cristoforo Coppola does not hesitate to declare that " the religious common sense of the most pious and learned Italians recognizes that the apostate and illegitimate sovereign of Rome is Judaizing and imposing on the consciences of men a fictitious and injurious religion."

The extent and ultimate results of this reform movement, however, must be influenced largely by political events. If Savonarola had enjoyed, as did Luther, the puissant protection of a temporal sovereign, the Reformation might have dated from the fifteenth instead of the sixteenth century ; if Luther had been abandoned to the unrestricted persecution of Leo X., his reformation might have been as short-lived as that of John Huss and Jerome of Prague ; while if the temporal princes of Italy had imitated the Elector of Saxony and the Landgrave of Hesse, and had sustained Peter Martyr, Bernardino Ochino, and Aonio Paleario, all Europe might have been led to throw off the yoke. Thus far the aid which the Italian reformers have received has been rather passive than active, while the fluctuating policy of the government has frequently thrown obstacles in their path. The absorption of Rome, even though it might not alter theoretically the relations between the Pope and his subordinates, would materially improve their condition. As the allies of the government against reaction, they would be efficiently protected against the petty persecution which now harasses them so effectually ; and as the Kingdom of Italy would have triumphed in its efforts to render the temporal interests of the Church subordinate to the state, many of the worst abuses of which they complain would die a natural death. With the extension of secular education, the diffusion

of intelligence, and the training of the people in self-government, their sphere of action would enlarge, and Italy might in a generation be prepared to range herself in the van of modern progress and liberalism.

To bring about all this the disasters of last November have largely contributed. The unification of the Italian nation has been greatly accelerated, while the Pope-king has stood forth more prominently than ever as the obstacle to progress. As long as he protested his helplessness to resist, and declared his readiness to die rather than to abandon the sacred heritage confided to his feeble hands, even his enemies could not but entertain a feeling of respect for the fortitude which seemed to draw its strength from faith alone, and to preserve its consistency with the precepts of the Saviour. When, however, he showed to the world how perfectly the Church represents the ultimate development of feudalism, — a lord paramount whose vassals of whatever degree are equally his serfs, — and how utterly the spiritual sovereignty has been subordinated to the temporal; when men reflected that in the height of its mediæval power the Church always denied to itself the right to shed blood, and that even the fiercest Inquisitor always “relaxed” his victims by handing them over to the secular tribunals for punishment, they could not but shudder to see the Vicegerent of Christ recruiting soldiers in every corner of Catholic Europe, offering blessings and bounties with equal hand, signing death-warrants, sending his mercenaries to battle, and after killing his enemies, enjoying the additional satisfaction of consigning them to eternal damnation, and of ordering their friends to sing *Te Deums* over their graves. It is not every one whose heart is so hardened by religious zeal as to enjoy the pious joke of Bishop Dupanloup in rejoicing over the Papal victory. “It was necessary,” said he, “that blood should flow, *Transtulit illos per mare rubrum.*” This terrible commingling of the sacred and profane was aptly illustrated by the awkward enthusiasm of General de Failly, when he hastened to inform Louis Napoleon that at Mentana the new rifles had performed miracles; and it is no wonder that the reformers eagerly caught up the idea by suggesting that the new saint should be added to the calendar, and that a new invocation should

be inserted in the Roman litany, — *Sancte Chassepot ora pro nobis !*

These shocking incongruities have been made use of skillfully and vigorously, and their effect upon the popular mind cannot but be deep and lasting. More than ever the Papacy has become the enemy of Italy and of civilization ; and though the unfathomable mysteries of intriguing diplomacy may yet for a while preserve its secular authority over populations which detest its rule, yet the antagonism thus developed can hardly be assuaged. The opposing principles admit of no compromise ; they are committed to inevitable strife, and, unless the progress of the last three centuries be a mistake, it is the Papacy that must ultimately be worsted. Under the guidance of Jesuits inflamed with the *rabbia sanfedistica*, it cannot bend ; and, unless wiser counsels prevail among its rulers, it may come to be broken.

Meanwhile the apparent triumph of the reactionary movement is tempting it on to fresh assertions of power, and the present appearances are that the reformers will shortly be exposed to sharper persecutions than ever. By the enforced submission of Cardinal D'Andrea they have lost an efficient protector, and they are momentarily in expectation of measures of repression which will test their steadfastness to the utmost. It is the turning-point of their fortunes. If they can hold their own through the contest of the next twelve months, the movement will assume a solidity and power that must lead to notable results, and in the trials thus near at hand they should have the sympathy of all friends of civilization and freedom throughout Christendom.

H. C. LEA.